taluks and that they are only periodically cultivable. The tracts had to be cleared of jungle, labour was not easily obtainable in the localities, water-supply was scarce and the crops had to be protected from wild animals. Unless a large area of land was available, systematic cultivation would be impossible. But this was rendered difficult by large tracts fit for such cultivation being included within reserves or granted to European planters. The upset price would amount to a large sum and unless some concession was given to the ryots by putting a light assessment on the lands, people would not willingly come forward to take up Cherikal cultivation and even the lands now under cultivation stood the chance of being summarily abandoned. The member requested that due consideration might be paid to the above difficulties in the settlement of Cherikal lands.

Mr. K. G. Raghava Menon (Changanachery) also spoke on the subject.

Reply.—Government have under consideration the question of laying down some special rules for the settlement of Cherikals. The suggestions now made will be considered in that connection.

8. Heavy assessment fixed on the ground and trees in Shertallay.

Mr. Narasimha Kammathi of Shertallay (Nominated) represented that both land and trees in Shertallay were heavily assessed by the settlement officers and requested a reduction in the rates.

Reply.—Fair rates appear to have been fixed.

9. Increase in the present assessment on Kettuthengu.

Mr. Narayanan Madhavan Karthavu (Shertallay) said that tax on cocoanut-oil was not a source of garden revenue throughout the State, but was levied only in Shertallay and Vaikam. The necessity for the abolition of this tax was pressed on the attention of Government at the last session of the Assembly. There were special difficulties attending the cultivation of cocoanut trees in sandy tracts like Shertallay. In Mr. Ramiengar's Settlement Memorandum it is stated that 3 per cent. of the trees alone is set apart as those on which the Sovereign's due is to be levied in the shape of oil, but the practice now followed by the Settlement Department was to set apart 25 per cent. or one for every 4 trees. As this was a hardship, the member prayed that, in case Government were not prepared to abolish the tax

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

altogether, only 3 per cent. of the trees might be assessed and that in gardens containing less than 33 trees no assessment whatever might be levied on this account.

Mr. Aiyappan Pillai (*Vaikam*) *and Mr. Narasimha Kammathi of Shertallay* (*Nominated*) also advocated the abolition of tax on Kettuthengu.

Reply.—Kettuthengu has been abolished by the Settlement Proclamation. In regard to the method of calculating the old tax and fixing the present assessment, individual representations may be made to the proper authorities.

10. Assessment on cardamom gardens.

Mr. H. M. Knight (*Cardamom Planters' Association*) said that when Government refused to allow retrospective effect to the new rules by which the assessment on cardamom gardens was reduced from Rs. 6¼ to Rs. 2 per acre it was feared that many ryots would not be benefited by the concession as their gardens were liable to be sold for arrears of revenue. This unfortunately proved only too true and more than 50 per cent. of the ryots who for years had paid the high assessment of Rs. 6¼ per acre had to lose their gardens. He requested that the assessment on gardens of over 100 acres in extent might be calculated at the rate of Rs. 2 instead of at Rs. 6¼ per acre as all the large estates had been assessed at the latter rate before even 30 per cent. of the gardens were giving crop.

Reply.—It has been decided that no retrospective effect could be given to the reduced rate, but by way of concession the collection of tax for 1080 was ordered to be postponed to 1081. Government regret that nothing further can be done in the matter.

11. That, in the assessment of palm trees, the settlement authorities should take into consideration the condition of the trees subjected to blight.

Mr. K. Aiyappan Pillai (*Minachil*) said that in Minachil and adjoining taluks cocoanut trees were largely affected by blight and that the yield from them became considerably reduced in consequence. He prayed that this fact might be borne in mind by the settlement authorities when the trees came to be assessed.

Reply.—There seems to be some ground for complaint. The matter will be taken into consideration at the settlement. Individual

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly